Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 05664 220852Z

15
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-10 SAJ-01 (ISO) W
---------- 014588
R 220633Z MAY 75
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5097
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 5664

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CH, CB, US
SUBJECT: PEKING REACTION TO MAYAGUEZ AFFAIR

REF: HONG KONG 5524

SUMMARY: APPARENTLY BELIEVING IT IS NECESSARY TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT, NCNA MAY 21 CARRIED A CORRESPONDENT ARTICLE (THE LOWEST LEVEL OF AUTHORITATIVE PRC COMMENT) ON THE US "IMPROVED IMAGE" REACTION TO THE MAYAGUEZ AFFAIR. THE ARTICLE SHARPLY CRITICIZES THE REACTION AS "SELF GLORIFI-CATION," CLAIMING THE INCIDENT WORSENED THE US WORLD IMAGE, WAS OPPOSED BY MOST OF THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD (INCLUDING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE), AND WAS WHITEWASHED BY THE SOVIETS. END SUMMARY

1. IN A LOW-LEVEL CORRESPONDENT ARTICLE MAY 21, NCNA POINTS OUT THE LOSS OF "MORE THAN 30 US SOLDIERS" HAVING BEEN KILLED OR WOUNDED AS THE US "VICTORY" IN THE MAYAGUEZ
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PAGE 02 HONG K 05664 220852Z

AFFAIR. CLAIMING THAT WORLD OPINION OPPOSED THE US ACTION

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("PROTESTING VOICES," THAI STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS) THE ARTICLE MAINTAINS THAT THE "US IMAGE HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY BLACKENED BY THE SMOKE OF ITS OWN GUNBOATS." IT ALSO CLAIMS THAT, DESPITE THE "SHOUTED HOORAYS" IN THE US PRESS," MANY AMERICAN WRITERS CONSIDERED THE ACTION "FOOLISH" AND AMERICAN JURISTS CONSIDERED IT A "VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW."

2. THE ARTICLE MAINTAINS THAT THE US ACTION WAS TAKEN FOR US DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS (TO "BOOST MORALE") AND IMPROVE THE US WORLD IMAGE. THE RESULT, HOWEVER, WAS ONLY TO MAKE THE US "MORE DISCREDITED THAN EVER" AFTER "ITS INDOCHINA FIASCO HAS DETAILED THE IMAGE OF THE US PAPER TIGER."

3. THE SOVIETS ALSO COME IN FOR CONDEMNATION AS THE "APOLOGISTS FROM MOSCOW" WHO REPORTED IN TASS THAT THE SHIP WAS SEIZED IN AN "AREA OF CAMBODIA'S COAST" RATHER THAN THE PRC PHRASE OF "IN CAMBODIA'S TERRITORIAL SEA."

4. COMMENT: THIS LOW-LEVEL NCNA PIECE IS ONE OF THE SHARPEST CHINESE SWIPES AT THE US TO HAVE APPEARED IN THE INDOCHINA AFTERMATH. UNDOUBTEDLY THE DESIRE OF PEKING TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN ITS IMAGE AS THE CLOSEST FRIEND OF THE NEW CAMBODIA PLUS THE PRC INABILITY TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE AFFAIR (AS ACKNOWLEDGED BY TENG HSIAO-PING IN PARIS), CONTRIBUTED TO ITS SHARPNESS. THE MAIN MODERATING FEATURE OF THE ARTICLE IS ITS IMPLIED RECOGNITION THAT THE INCIDENT IS CLOSED AND DONE WITH. THE DOOR IS LEFT OPEN, HOWEVER, FOR FURTHER PRC COMMENT IF THE MAYAGUEZ CONTINUES TO ATTRACT WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY, ESPECIALLY IF SUCH PUBLICITY CONTINUES TO DISCUSS THE PRC ROLE IN NOTE-PASSING TO THE CAMBODIAS.
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Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
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Draft Date: 22 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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ISecure: 1
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